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CONTENTS.

PAGE

EDITORIALS	69-74
The President on Our Relations to Other Nations—The Greatest Battle in History, The Greatest Dishonor—Hon. John D. Long on Increase of the Navy—Rumors of Peace—The Christ of the Andes—Annual Meeting of the American Peace Society.	
EDITORIAL NOTES	74-77
"Let us Have Peace"—Kuropatkin's Disgrace—Canadian Peace Society—New York Women's Peace Circle—South Carolina's Voice for Peace—The Bloch Foundation—International Institute of Agriculture—Arbitration Group in Congress.	
BREVITIES	77-78
GENERAL ARTICLES:	
Brave Brothers, Fight no More. <i>Poem. Julia Harris May</i>	79
Efforts to Bring About Mediation Between Russia and Japan ..	79-80
International Arbitration at the Opening of the Twentieth Century. <i>Benjamin F. Trueblood</i>	80-85
Women and War. <i>Grace Isabel Colbron</i>	85-86
One Other Neutral Water Way. <i>J. W. Leeds</i>	86-87
What the United States Should Do to Promote a General Treaty of Obligatory Arbitration at the Next Hague Conference.	87
A Business Man's View of the Senate's Action on the Arbitration Treaties. <i>A. B. Farquhar</i>	87-88
Some Suitable Inscriptions for the Gateways of Ports, Arsenals and for Battle Flags. <i>Mary S. Robinson</i>	88-89

The President on Our Relations to Other Nations.

In his inaugural address on the 4th of March, President Roosevelt gave utterance again in a succinct way to his well-known views in regard to our national relations to other countries. The following passage covers essentially the whole range of his thought on this subject:

"Toward all other nations, large and small, our attitude must be one of cordial and sincere friendship. We must show not only in our words but in our deeds that we are earnestly desirous of securing their goodwill by acting toward them in a spirit of just and generous recognition of all their rights. But justice and generosity, as in an individual, count most when shown not by the weak but by the strong. While ever careful to refrain from wronging others, we must be no less insistent that we are not wronged ourselves. We wish peace; but we wish the peace of justice, the peace of righteousness. We wish it because we think it is right, and not because we are afraid. No weak nation that acts rightly and justly should ever have cause to fear us, and no strong power should ever be able to single us out as a subject for insolent aggression."

The sentiments expressed in the first two sentences of the above citation are entirely sound and noble. The truth about our moral obligations toward other nations could not well be better phrased in the same number of words. In his message to Congress in December, and more particularly in his address at the unveiling of the statue of Frederick the Great, the President gave utterance in a much ampler way to the same ideas. Nothing could be finer than the passage in the latter address in which he unfolded our national duties to Germany and other foreign countries.

We have not the least doubt that Mr. Roosevelt is perfectly sincere in these excellent utterances. But it is to be regretted that he did not leave the counterpart in the above paragraph, and in similar paragraphs in the other cases, unspoken. He weakens by these supplementary sentences, where his thought becomes discordant, the whole force of his previous assertions, and lays them open to suspicion of insincerity and pretense. He could not have chosen a worse support for his position than that of justice and generosity in individuals. Here physical strength and weakness have nothing to do with the effectiveness of these qualities. Justice and generosity in individuals count for what they are in themselves, not by reason of the height or the avoirdupois of the person, the facility with which he can punch, or the quantity of small artillery which he carries in his hip pockets. One of the glories of our common life is that exhibitions of justice and generosity by physically weak persons often win the highest mead of praise and confidence, and are most effective in influence, because they are known to be the pure stuff. The suggestion that behind your just and generous conduct you have a reserve of muscle and fist, or of pistol and powder, with which to drive it home, if necessary, is not conducive to confidence in the purity of your professions.

Again, well bred people in private life are not always trumpeting it about that they will not allow themselves to be wronged. The greatest and most influential men are those who, doing right themselves, pay least heed to the petty insults and wrongs which befall them, but bear them patiently without seeking satisfaction and revenge. The peace which these men seek is something greater than "the peace of justice," of enforced justice, that is; it is the peace which self-control, magnanimity, self-sacrifice, unstinted beneficence, patient endurance of wrong, create and enforce by their very nature. This is

now in large measure the law of life in all our Christian communities. It ought to be given at least a trial or two in international life before it is declared to be impracticable there.

The President's frequent use of the words injustice, "insolent aggression," and the like, in regard to possible malignant purposes of foreign powers towards us is most unfortunate. He wishes "cordial and sincere friendship" to exist between us and all other nations; but dark hints of a spirit of insolent aggression in them is the best possible means of preventing them from feeling cordial friendliness towards us. If we expect other nations to trust us and believe in our assertions of disinterested regard for them, we must trust them in a generous way. That is the immutable law of friendship. If we openly charge them, however indirectly and hypothetically, with hostile feelings against us, who can blame them for feeling that we are very unfair and essentially hostile toward them, notwithstanding all our high pretensions of "acting" toward them in a spirit of just and generous recognition of all their rights?

The Greatest Battle in History—The Greatest Dishonor.

Certain editors and correspondents, and a good many other people, too, have been entertaining themselves since the beginning of the recent gigantic battle at Moukden with calculations to show that it has been the greatest battle ever fought in human history.

Most of these calculations have revealed no sense of anguish at the direfulness of the stupendous duel, every move in which has been attended with the wholesale slaughter and mangling of thousands of men and the desolation of innumerable far-away homes. A certain keen intellectual relish seems to have been taken by these people in the atrocious conflict, as if the soldiers who have been shooting and bayoneting one another, and suffering and dying in frightful masses, had been nothing more than lifeless pieces on an immense chessboard, or wooden pins at the end of some huge bowling alley. The big battle with its hundred miles of fighting men has been spoken of as if it had been a fine and noble event, worthy to be recorded alongside the truly great occurrences of the world's history. Its very bigness seems, in the minds of many, to have clothed it with extraordinary excellence and attractiveness, and to have covered up its inherent ghastliness and shame.

It is hard to understand this cold and heartless attitude of mind in people calling themselves civilized, people trained in our schools and in our churches, who are thoroughly tender and humane in common life, people who are driven to the verge of nervous wreck by the death and ruin caused by a boiler explosion like that, for instance, which re-

cently destroyed a hundred people in Brockton, Mass. These same people can, many of them, read with positive pleasure the accounts of the great butcheries of men about Moukden. The multiplication of the horrible explosion by thousands on every hillside, in every gorge and glen, where the big shrieking shells tumble in every minute with their deliverances of hell, transforms for them the whole business; it turns darkness into light; and, like ignorant children who see nothing back of the flaming spectacle, they shout: "Splendid! Magnificent! Glorious!"

What is the cause? The false ideas of war which have so long ruled the world, and perverted both men's judgment and their moral sense. If only men could tear themselves loose from these old conceptions, from the tyrannous power of a crude and senseless public sentiment and have the courage to look at things as they are, in the light of their own reason, there would not be left a man on the earth to say a single word in condonement of the ghastly tragedy in Manchuria.

This has indeed been the greatest battle in history. It has thrown more men into deadly array against one another than any other recorded engagement. It has cost more in life and treasure. It has been the fullest of horrible *mêlés*. But for this very reason it has been the greatest dishonor in the annals of man. The excuses which might be offered for the ancient barbarities cannot be made for it. It has taken place at the opening of this twentieth century, not in the days of the Huns and Visigoths. It has been a murderous deed of midnight executed openly at high noon. It shames every civilized man of us in every Christian country that such a thing has been possible at this late day. We are as guilty in our way as the perpetrators themselves. We have taught them or encouraged them in the cultivation of the arts of death. The great battle is therefore the world's sin and shame.

There are of course many people who have from the beginning felt the iniquity and dishonor of the conflict. The number of these increases daily as the war drags its bloody length over the hills and across the plains of Manchuria. The cry for peace, a final peace for the world too, is becoming louder and stronger day by day. Even war men are joining the ranks of those who demand peace. This gigantic struggle is too much for them. They like war—in the abstract. It is their profession. They can stand a fair amount of the butchery of men; a few "bloody angles" and ditches filled with dead and dying men do not greatly disturb their composure. But this "awful slaughter of human beings" in Manchuria is carrying the thing a little too far. It reaches the inmost depths of their natures, where conscience and humane feeling, still alive in spite of their profession, rise up in revolt against the awful business. Lord